

**Minutes of Meeting**  
**Trail County Economic Development Commission**  
**January 19, 2023 – 7:00 p.m.**  
**TCEDC Conference Room, Hillsboro, N.D. and online via Zoom**

**Present:** Board members: AJ Andresen, Mark Duncan, Larry Young, Cassie Braaten, Jami Hovet, Marshall Erickson, Ben Hershey, Vicky Grothmann, David Knudsvig, Dr. Brian Van Horn and Dustin Olson. Also present: Jim Murphy – TCEDC Executive Director, Alyssa Short – TCEDC Deputy Director and Brian Whisney, owner of The 1933 LLC.

The meeting was called to order at 7 p.m. by Chair Jami Hovet.

**Introductions – New board members**

The board did a round of introductions to welcome its three new members.

**Agenda additions**

None.

**The 1933 LLC Flex PACE loan request**

Brian Whisney and Allison Bertsch are looking to purchase the former Dakota Heritage Bank building to house another of their businesses, Civil Specialties, and additional renters. They're seeking a Flex PACE interest buydown of \$17,375.14, which would be split 50/50 with the Hillsboro EDC.

Hershey, chair of the business assistance committee, gave a recap of the previous week's meeting. He said the reason it was brought to the full board for discussion is that there is an opportunity for Civic Specialties to grow and to provide more rental space opportunities within the city of Hillsboro and the county overall, where there currently is a shortage of smaller workspaces.

Whisney gave more details about the project, explaining that he and Bertsch also own the Hillsboro Inn, and because they're eliminating the front end of the hotel to create more common-area space for guests, they would like to use the office space at the bank building. He added that the rental availability also is a good space for other businesses in which to start.

Erickson asked about Civil Specialties, which is an excavation and water quality business. That business will lease one office and the other three will be leased out. Erickson said the hotel expanding is good and Civil Specialties is a good, relatively new business opportunity. The Hillsboro Inn has one full-time and two part-time employees, aside from Whisney and Bertsch. Civil Specialties has two FTEs, including Whisney, and he's looking to add three more FTEs in the next 18 months.



Short said she and Murphy are supporters of the bank project because their office gets continued requests for office rental space and they would love to have a place for businesses to set up so those businesses don't land elsewhere.

Whisney said the former teller area will become conference room space. Three office spaces will be rented out and The 1933 has begun advertising for tenants. The conference room renovation will start right away, and the loan buydown would go toward the purchase of the building.

Erickson made a motion to approve a loan up to \$18,000, before half the cost is billed to HEDC, funded annually for a 5-year period to BND and due within 12 months after completion of the funding period, with a variable interest rate of prime plus 1 percent, accrued annually, starting upon the first payment to Bank of North Dakota, with no penalty for early payoff. Young seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Whisney left the meeting at 7:17 p.m.

#### **Secretary's report**

Hershey moved to accept the Dec. 22, 2022 meeting minutes, seconded by Braaten. Motion carried.

#### **Treasurer's report/approve checks**

Short noted that the business savings account at The Goose River Bank had been closed, as had the Visa card account with First State Bank. Both the December and 2022 EOY reports were included in the packet. Several beautification grants had been paid but she hasn't started yet on 2022 taxes or the audit. Grothmann moved to receive and approve the treasurer's report, seconded by Erickson. Motion carried.

Short noted the check request for the annual fee from Remark Consulting for TCEDC's portion of the county's IT contract, various dues that were up for renewal, a Flex PACE installment payment for Hillsboro Body Shop and a voided check because sometimes the printer grows weary and seeks its revenge on humans. Knudsvig moved to approve checks, seconded by Hershey. Motion carried.

Hershey asked for a recap on the customer balance summary, Flex PACE program and revolving loan fund. Short and Murphy gave an update on the differences between the loan programs for the existing customer balances and also the revolving loan fund spreadsheet they've created to be in a better position to pinpoint the anticipated balance of the revolving loan fund at any point in time for the next five years. This will help with helping the business assistance committee and full board know the impact of any loan approvals to ensure the fund is being overextended at any point in time.

### **Executive Director's report**

Murphy said he and Short had spoken with Golden Path Solutions, a type of recruiting service that is being endorsed through the state. They're trying to get local employers lined up with that group. They met with District 20 Rep. Mike Beltz about child care, because Beltz is on a committee that is reviewing solutions at the state level for good-quality child care across the state.

Murphy spoke with an entrepreneur interested in relocating a business in Hatton, which would result in job creation. TCEDC held its long-awaited community showcase. He said there were many contacts made with builders in person, via email and on the phone. Knudsvig said he'd like to see another one. Murphy said he hopes for secondary and tertiary benefits, because several attendees requested tours, more information and meetings – although he cautioned it will take time for anything to develop. Murphy and Short took part in a discussion about brownfield grant opportunities at the state level, spoke with a Grand Forks businessperson about expanding into western Traill and talked to Stabil Nutrition about its building expansion and some infrastructure problems. They also submitted a few requests for proposal for potential land in eastern Traill.

Murphy gave an update on the N.D. Livestock Alliance pilot project with Traill County. He said NDLA is working diligently on compiling site information to determine potential environmental issues and will be at township officers' meeting. TCEDC has been working with a few people who have a vested interest in outdoor winter activities and who carved out a few sample snowshoes and cross-country trails. The office hopes for this type of activity to grow. Murphy and Short contributed a little help with the Valley United food drive and participated in the GNDC legislative forum.

### **Update on ND Livestock Alliance infrastructure report**

See Executive Director's update.

### **Update on Community Showcase**

Murphy said TCEDC plans on doing this again, although they've learned that January is not a good month for builders.

### **Crafting your Community event upcoming (February 28)**

The Patrick Bertagnolli event at MPCG High School will be a great community-building presentation that every community can gain from to help boost its recruiting efforts.

### **Job Fair/Career Expo upcoming (March 22)**

This will be the fifth-annual job fair and career expo; TCEDC is hoping to add a few new schools and hoping to continue to improve the event.

**Committee appointments**

Hovet included the following list of committee recommendations for 2023, but said to reach out if anyone would have a different preference:

2023 Traill County Economic Development Commission Committees				
Executive Committee	Business Assistance Committee	Organizational Development Committee	Marketing Committee	Nominating Committee
X, Chair - Jami	X, Chair - Ben	X, Chair - David	X, Chair - Brian	X, Chair - Ben
X - David	X - Marshall	X - Les	X - Cassie	X - David
X - Ben	X - Dustin	X - Larry	X - Mark	
X - Marshall	X - Jami		X - AJ	
	X - Vicky		X - Judd	

**Schedule marketing committee meeting for annual plan/priorities**

Murphy requested that the marketing committee meet prior to the February board meeting to discuss priorities for the coming year. He’ll set up the meeting, and is soliciting feedback from the remaining board members as to ideas.

**Strategic Plan (applying for Planning Grant)**

Murphy said he hoped the Partners in Planning Grant would be available by the Department of Commerce and that he hoped TCEDC would apply for help with the boots-on-the-ground parts of the process.

**Mayville State regional EDND group legislative priority and support strategy**

TCEDC hosted the most recent EDND regional meeting at MSU; EDND’s legislative priorities are high level and the onus is on the local groups to work together to drive support for common issues. MSU’s Old Main request is an example of a request that might seem local but has huge statewide impact.

**Board member apparel order**

Murphy will send options to the board; word around the campfire is cat-themed apparel would be welcomed.

**Community updates**

- Young – After four sessions, political subdivisions are finally getting some of the Prairie Dog funds. Each township will get about \$10,000. Traill County got more than \$3 million. Murphy suggested the county build bridges using love, because love can build a bridge – at least from what he’s heard from listening to early 1990s country music.
- Duncan – Hatton is dealing with water projects and looking to improve the city’s water pressure. Jimmy’s & Bonita’s Pizza is looking for more space; Murphy will reach out to them.

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- Grothmann – Hillsboro High School has set up tours Jan. 23 for people who are interested in learning more about the next steps for a school construction project. The school district has set an election March 28 for the debt limit increase vote.
- Andresen – Valley United is doing a food drive project starting Jan. 25 through Feb. 8. Feb. 9 is Giving Hearts Day; Dakota Medical Foundation contacted Valley United about being the collection agency in between Fargo and Grand Forks. Goods can be dropped off at each Valley United location and Valley United has specified that the food should be brought back to this area. The company would like this to be an annual event.
- Hershey –Buxton attended the community showcase. The city council has had discussions about parking restrictions in town based on a random RV being parked on city streets. H-CV’s football team will have a new head coach and the recently resigned coach will be working at Mayville State. The Ice Dawgs hockey program had its alumni hockey scrimmage –35-40 alumni played in the older game and about 20 in the younger game.
- Braaten – Noted that someone from Arizona came just for the Ice Dawgs alumni game.
- Erickson – The Goose River Bank in Mayville is getting a new roof.
- Van Horn – Old Main continues to be the main priority this legislative sessions. The school also is very appreciative of the governor’s recommended salary increases. MSU’s salaries are below average, so they’re asking legislators for more competitive salaries to help with workforce issues. The bill’s language needs to include all benefited positions.
- Olson – Noted that in addition to teachers and others, many business and accounting alums also are at work in the state.
- Knudsvig – Township roads are getting better. Gave kudos to Andresen and Valley United and said he’s proud to serve on the board of the company.
- Hovet – The Beehive is Reynolds is always creating events to keep things busy in the winter. They’ve got some unique events coming up.

Young moved to adjourn the meeting. Meeting adjourned at 8:33 p.m.

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Officer (printed name & office)	Signature	Date
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Recording Secretary (printed name)	Signature	Date
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